

What kind of place is Hora?

Hora area is located one kilometer east of the city center and the Owari Seto Station on the Meitetsu Seto Line. With the prosperity of the pottery industry in the Seto village that started in the 19th century, a lot of large multi-chambered climbing kilns were also built in Hora and pottery production developed greatly.

In the same period, following the introduction of porcelain production techniques by Kato Tamikichi, pioneer of porcelain, a great number of porcelain production kilns were built in the surrounding areas, and eventually their number exceeded the number of pottery production kilns. However, compared to the other areas, workers in Hora were attached to the production of pottery ware and they have continued this tradition until now. The *kamagaki*, or pottery walls, that can be found throughout Hora give the area a unique atmosphere making it possible for the visitors to feel the existence of the craftsmen who lived here making pottery ware.

The city with unique geometric patterns

Seto is decorated with colorful geometric patterns made of pottery objects. The best examples are the *kamagaki* pottery walls. Different types of these walls can be seen in the Kamagaki no Komichi (path with kamagaki pottery walls). In addition to Kamagaki no Komichi, more than 600 *kamagaki* pottery walls can be found in the city, mainly on the banks of the Seto River.

Kamagaki is a type of foundation material for fences, retaining walls and other constructions made by potters in their spare time using large pieces of old kiln furniture, such as saggars, plates, and supports from climbing kilns or coal kilns. These materials are robust enough to withstand the weight of the earth. *Kamagaki* walls do not contain cement or other types of binder but are reinforced by the assembly of pieces of kiln furniture of different sizes and shapes. These walls can reach almost 4 meters in height and 30 meters in length. The circular, square, rectangular, and tubular shapes of the kiln furniture can be easily seen in *kamagaki* walls. Let's go for a stroll in Seto and try to find your favorite *kamagaki* wall.



Hosenji Temple main hall

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Hosenji Temple

The Hosenji temple was founded in 1252 as the Reisuizan-Jinguji temple. What happened to the temple during the next 300 years remains unknown, but in 1596 the temple was completely destroyed in a fire. In 1633, the Zensatsu Daishozan Hosenji temple was founded on the same grounds by Konan, a Buddhist priest from the Unkoji temple in Akazu. The main hall contains a statue of Shakyamuni Buddha, while a statue of Thousand-armed and Thousand-eyed Kannon can be found at the ground floor of the Kannon hall. The second floor is used by the monks to practice zazen meditation. The splendid Amenbo Festival is held in the temple every year in November.



Sanmon (Main gate)

The *Sanmon* gate is built in the *Ryugu* style with a double vertical structure, which is very rare in Japan. The upstairs level was used as a bell tower.



Bell Tower

The temple bell was given during World War II to contribute to the war effort. In 1952, it has been replaced thanks to the donations of parishioners. Images of *tennyo*, spiritual beings from heaven in Buddhism, are drawn on the ceiling of the tower.



Headless Jizo Statue

The headless *jizo* statue can be found on the left hand side just after passing through the *Sanmon* gate. Legend says that a government official cut off the heads of the statue during the Edo period while searching for hidden Christians.



Watanabe Kohei Memorial Stone

Kohei was a low-rank warrior from Shikoku who became a molder for the steel casting industry in Kyoto. Later, he took part in the construction of the Toso monument in Toso Park in Seto. He is known as the father of clay sculpture for his accomplishment in teaching the sculpture techniques to younger artists.



Clay Statues of the Sixteen Arhats (Cultural Property of Seto City)

These statues were made by Kato Zen-emon (Kobo Zenji) in 1843. Although the majority of arhats statues are made of wood, these are made of pottery while the robes are glazed using methods from Seto, such as *Oribe* or *Kiseto* etc.



Ceiling Painting

The paintings on the ceiling of the main hall were allegedly made by ceramic painters from Seto. Some of the paintings were lost in a fire in 1596, but they were restored during the reconstruction of the temple. Today, 200 paintings, old and new, can be seen.